

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

I. CLAIM STATUS AND AMENDMENTS

Claims 10-28 were pending in this application when last examined. Claims 10-23 were rejected. By way of the present amendment, Applicants have cancelled the rejected claims without prejudice or disclaimer thereto. Applicants reserve the right to file a continuation or divisional application on any cancelled subject matter.

Claims 24-28 were objected as being based on a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. See item 4 on page 12 of the Office Action.

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter in claims 24-28. These claims have been rewritten in independent form as suggested by the Examiner. Thus, claims 24-28 remain pending in this application and should be in condition for allowance.

No new matter has been added.

The specification has been amended at page 1 to include a continuation data section per U.S. practice.

This amendment should be entered and considered after final rejection, because the amended claims correspond to the

subject matter indicated as allowed by the Examiner. As such, the subject matter of the amended claims has been fully considered in the current Office Action. Therefore, there is nothing that would require further consideration and/or search, and hence no ground for refusing entry to this amendment. If the next Office Action on the merits includes a new rejection of one or more claims, the Action must be non-final.

II. CLAIM OBJECTION

Claims 24-28 stand objected as being based on a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. See item 4 on page 12 of the Office Action.

The present amendment overcomes this objection by amending the claims to independent form.

III. PRIOR ART REJECTIONS

Claims 10-23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as separately anticipated by ENGST (US 5,972,470) and WATANABE (US 4,469,729) for the reasons on pages 2-11 of the Office Action.

For the sole purpose of expediting prosecution and not to acquiesce to these rejections, claims 10-23 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Thus, the present amendment renders the rejections moot.

IV. CONCLUSION


Having addressed all the outstanding issues, the amendment is believed to be fully responsive. In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance and notice to that effect is hereby requested. If the Examiner has any comments or proposals for expediting prosecution, please contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number below.

Please charge the fee of \$440 for two extra independent claims added herewith to our credit card set forth in the attached Credit Card Payment Form.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 25-0120 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17.

Respectfully submitted,

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